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IRC NEWS – 016

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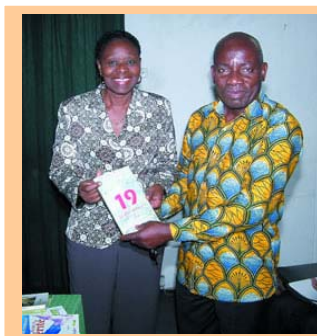


Table of Contents

Information Technology @ Fraternite Matin	02
Black History Month Rosa Parks Bus ride to Freedom	03
Book of the Month 'The Audacity of Hope'	05
Immersion with UCAO (1)	06
Webchat on 'Diversity Complexity and Culture'	07

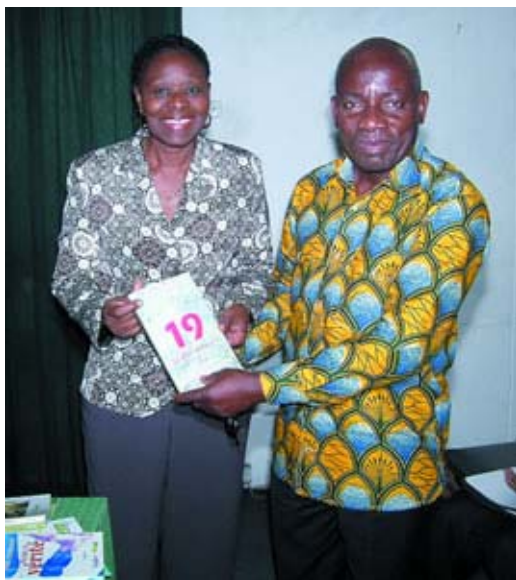
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Information Technology session to Fraternite Matin The largest circulating newspaper in Côte d'Ivoire

PAS Abidjan conducted an Information Technology session to promote the IRC resources and the new IIP web site America.gov at the main state-owned daily on Wednesday February 06, 2008. After the welcome address by Mr. Zio Moussa, the head of the publishing department, the DPAO Etta Toure introduced the program underlining that the purpose is to share the resources and services available for key contacts in order to foster and maintain the mutual understanding between the US and Cote d'Ivoire.

The program was well attended by the leading team of the company and Ivorian writers. Participants paid close attention to the PowerPoint presentation of the IIP products, the IRC online and print resources, the services and programs designed for them. The IRC Director put a special focus on the State Department new website www.america.gov which provides a lot of information on the United States and worldwide. She emphasized the innovative services such as Ask America, World Region and the special Africa page, the photo gallery, the multimedia section with videos. The ARS Nouveaux Horizons collection particularly grasped the participants' attention. The Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Jean-Baptiste Akrou, testified that the strategies he learnt from '*The Contrarian's Guide to Leadership*' and '*Gung Ho!*' helped him come out with the demanding challenges as a newly appointed CEO.

Mr. Zio Moussa seized the occasion to introduce and present to PAS, Ivorian best-sellers books and materials published by Fraternite Matin. He extended his gratitude to the United States Mission in Cote d'Ivoire for his efforts to reinforce and maintain good relationship between the two nations. The DPAO presented Nouveaux Horizons books and IIP materials including the InfoUSA CD-ROM, the E-journal on Media, and pamphlets to the host institution. Fraternite Matin positively reported the event in the Thursday February 7 issue and also on its website:



Post donated 100 documents
to Fraternite Matin
including Nouveaux
Horizons books, IIP
Publications and CD-ROMs
E-Journals

Youth Leadership Development Program

Book discussion on '*Rosa Parks: Bus Ride to Freedom*'

February 6, 2008

PAS Abidjan organized a book discussion based on the junior series of the Nouveaux Horizons collection '*Rosa Parks: Bus Ride to Freedom*' on Wednesday February 6, 2008, to celebrate the African American History Month with youth. The IRC reading room was filled with 70 guests including young students' age ranging from 10 to 17, teachers and educators from selected public, private, and Islamic high schools. The program started with the welcome and opening address from the DPAO, Etta Toure, who encouraged the kids to participate to programs that PAS is planning to organize with young audiences to foster their knowledge of the world and especially of America, and also to build their English Language capacity.

The students themselves took full responsibility of the program. Three panelists, one moderator and a master of ceremony lead the discussion in English. The kids accurately interpreted Rosa Parks' historical background, her commitment to the struggle for civil rights, and her legacy to the future generations.

In addition, a Fulbright professor, Professor Dodo Hortense, was invited to give her testimony and share her experience about Rosa Parks, who she had the opportunity to meet when a student in Tuskegee University. Questions and answers obviously enriched the debate. The participants appreciated the program and expressed their gratitude and eagerness to take part to the upcoming activities targeted to kids. The PAO, Sharon White congratulated the students for the great and memorable book discussion they conducted. She has been interviewed by the national television who broadcasted the event. IIP posters and pamphlets on Civil Rights Movement were displayed and very much appreciated by the participants. Local print press and radio covered the program. Positive feedbacks and evaluation encourage post to carry on this young leadership development program.



Partial view of the participants.



Miss Myung Jin, the Master of Ceremony.



Active participation from the public



Mr. Essuman Gilles Evrad, the Moderator of the Conference



The moderator and panelists Mr. Saurav Mitra and Professor Dodo (from left to right)



Ms.F. Dembele and Elias Ekaterina: panelists (From left to right)



A view of English teachers



Ms. F. Dembele: panelist



PAO Sharon White delivering the closing words

Book of the month of February - The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream

PAS Abidjan initiated a series of four conferences called '*Get Acquainted with the Presidential Candidates*', aimed at reinforcing the Ivorian public knowledge of the United States electoral system along with biographical information on the Democrat and Republican presidential main candidates.

The first conference organized on Barack Obama was based on his book '*The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream*' on February 19, 2008. The PAO Sharon White in her welcome address insisted that the US Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire does not intend to favor one candidate to the detriment of the other.

The 80 participants included ministers, political party leaders, parliamentarians, woman leaders, university teachers and students, media professionals, members of the Ivorian Electoral Commission, and the civil society leaders. The panelists were in charge of focusing on the United States electoral process which is complex to common people on the one hand, and on the other hand, getting the audience to familiarize with this typical candidate Barack Obama, an African American. The first panelist, a former International Visitor on the US Electoral System Program succeeded in briefly explaining the US presidential electoral process. He focused on the fundamental steps of the electoral system, starting with the primaries, through the Electoral College. He also insisted on the importance of the civil society participation to the elections as the US is deeply linked to its democratic values. Introducing the candidate Barack Obama the Illinois' Democratic senator, the second panelist underlined his political, educational, moral, universal values, and ethics.

This enriching conference came out with outstanding results. The participants expressed a real interest to the topic. They agreed that Barack Obama inspires hope for the young generation, the African Americans, and the American society who advocates for racial equality and bans racial segregation. This conference will generate to a follow-up activity to be hosted by Fraternite Matin, the state-owned daily company. Print Medias such as *Notre Voie* (a daily close to the ruling FPI party), *Nord-Sud Quotidien* (a pro-opposition daily), the *National Television*, and *Radio* positively reported and broadcasted the event.



Partial view of the Participants



Panelists: Minister Badia Yro, Mr. Paul Arnaud (Moderator) and Mr. Zio Moussa (From left to right)



Active participant from the audience

The immersion session with the English club of the Universite Catholique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (UCAO)

On February 28th PAS organized an enriching immersion session with forty two students from the English Club of the UCAO. The session started up with GSO Wylita Bell who briefly presented herself and did an outstanding presentation of the place of the English language in the world and its importance for them as students.

After her brilliant exposé, she gave the floor to the students to ask questions. It came up with a successful discussion which led them to talk about the U. S. election since it is the hot subject of the moment.

The IRC staff presented a lecture on The Elements of Learning which kept the audience through its importance for the students, the IRC products and services and the useful web sites specially the America.gov for their researches. During the guided tour of the IRC, participants were impressed to discover tremendous and various resources available. They signed up for membership cards and took the opportunity to practice online research. A follow up activity is planned for a second group of the English of UCAO.



Active interaction of the students



DPAO Etta, offering IIP Publications
to Reverend Cakpo GSO Wylita our guest
speaker (from left to right)



Students browsing the IRC collection



Group photo with GSO Wylita and
DPAO Etta

Webchat on Diversity Complexity and Culture

The Information Resource Center Abidjan organized, jointly with Washington, DC a webchat on Diversity, Complexity, and Culture on February 29, 2008. The 16 participants involved in this program are graduates students from the English Department of the University of Cocody who conducted a cross-cultural research on multiculturalism in the United States, followed by a conference on 'Diversity in America'. This was a unique opportunity for them to deepen their knowledge about the subject.

Please find a partial transcription of the Webchat on 'Diversity Complexity and Culture

Scott Page: In this webchat, I would like to discuss the implications of immigration on productivity. Economic productivity can increase in two ways: through increases in efficiency and through innovation. Innovation can occur by creating new ideas, improving existing ideas, and combining existing ideas. Immigration policies may at first seem tangential to productivity but they are not.

Webchat Moderator: Dr. Page is reviewing your questions now!

Question [Isidore KOUADIO]: In the future are the countries of diversity not going to face a problem of national identity?

Answer [Scott Page]: I think this is definitely a concern. However, we have to distinguish between national identity and ethnic identity.

Webchat Moderator: We will post selected comments. If you would like to introduce yourself to the group, please do.

Q [bohousou louis charles k.k]: do you think that diversity can help develop a nation

A [Scott Page]: I think diversity is crucial to the development of a nation especially economically. Diverse people bring diverse skills and ideas which prove invaluable for innovation and growth.

If you want to read the full transcript, please refer to this link:

<http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2008/March/20080304185007xjsnommis0.4927942.html>

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